



Kentucky Office of the Attorney General

Special Meeting

January 12, 2021

10:00 a.m. EST

Minutes

- I. Call to order.
- II. Member Roll call and introductions: Laura Kretzer, Timothy Adams as designee for Matt Johnson, Rewa Zakharia, Caroline Ruschell, Susan Rhema, Christie Penn, Heather Wagers, Chelsea Harrod, Damien Sweeney, Carrie Ovey-Wiggins, Simone Hirsekron, Angela Morris, and Dr. Sugarman.
Guests: Cathy York and Theresa Gargan
- III. Review of minutes from November 10, 2020 meeting: Motion to approve the minutes was made by Caroline Ruschell. Motion was seconded by Chelsea Harrod. Motion passed unanimously.
- IV. Review/Approval of Annual Report: Laura Kretzer stated that the annual report includes general information about the MDT commission and specific work around the MDTs in Kentucky. The letter from the Commission about COVID will be attached. Heather Wagers asked if the model protocols being voted on are new or are included in the approved category of active model protocols in the state. Caroline Ruschell stated that there was a little bit of loss in the data in terms of how many protocols have been approved. Laura Kretzer stated that they used the numbers from the prior year's annual report then looked back through the minutes to see if there were any additional protocols approved. That is something they would like to begin to work on with the new model this year. They will begin a new cycle of tracking the protocols. Caroline Ruschell stated that she thinks there are more active protocols than are listed in the report. Heather Wagers stated that the Prosecutor's Advisory Council (PAC) is still trying to update all the information for the mandatory data tool collection (the number and types

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of cases reviewed). PAC is processing 2018 data for prosecutors, but is hopeful that within the next year they will be current. Caroline Ruschell stated that an annual report is required by statute, which references PAC data. Because the PAC data has been outdated, they have utilized some of the other sources of data such as CACs. The annual report provides information as to MDTs across the state. The report is shared with state leaders about what is happening with MDTs. This report is posted on the OAG website. Motion to approve the annual report was made by Christie Penn. Motion was seconded by Susan Rhema. Motion passed unanimously.

- V. Local Protocols: Caroline Ruschell stated 5 protocols came in from the Barren River Area Development District. The CAC advised there were no substantive changes. These are just signature updates. Laura Kretzer stated that the Barren River CAC has added an MDT team coordinator. Heather Wagers asked KSP Captain Timothy Adams about their experience in the process. Captain Adams stated that they try to attend all the meetings. They have a victim advocate that attends and tries to have an investigator or supervisor attend. Heather Wagers would like to discuss ways to improve the MDT from a law enforcement perspective. She also wants to know how we can make sure that we are providing the tools needed that lead to prosecution. Captain Adams stated that the downside to the meetings is that they go back and dwell on old cases that are still pending in court. He would like to have more current business discussed versus discussing old/pending cases.
1. Hart County-Heather Wagers made a motion to approve. Christie Penn seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
 2. Metcalf County- Heather Wagers made a motion to approve. Caroline Ruschell seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
 3. Warren County- Heather Wagers made a motion to approve. Susan Rhema seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
 4. Barren County- Heather Wagers made a motion to approve. Caroline Ruschell seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
 5. Monroe County- Heather Wagers made a motion to approve. Christie Penn seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
- VI. Update to the Model Protocol: Caroline Ruschell suggested that the board break up into committees for updating the model protocol. She would like to have multiple disciplines within a committee. Each committee would be responsible for certain sections of the protocol. She asked that Heather Wagers and Theresa Gargan put together a “Doodle poll”. Heather Wagers stated that once we know who is in each group we can assist with the coordination. Caroline Ruschell stated that she would tentatively place professions together.
- VII. Partner Updates and Announcements: Heather Wagers stated the OAG just launched the Your Eyes Save Lives campaign to raise awareness of human trafficking. This includes the

signs of human trafficking and how to report it. There is a website dedicated to this. It is at youreyessavelives@ky.gov. There are tools for educators on the website for law enforcement and prosecutors. Since the law has changed due to HB2, we want to make sure we are educating everyone about those changes. There are billboards in certain areas based on DCBS' reports of human trafficking against a child.

Damien Sweeney stated that it is a struggle right now with schools. Counselors are trying to get a hold of students in a virtual setting, but it is difficult especially for the traditionally marginalized students as well as underprivileged students or students that are at risk. They often suggest doing well checks on students with the police. They are also sending counselors to homes to check-in. This continues to be a concern for his area.

Christie Penn asked if Captain Adams could speak to the victim advocate programs within the state police. She asked if that position has long term funding or if it was funded through a grant. Timothy Adams stated that it initially came in as a grant for a year. It is his understanding that it has been re-upped for an additional year. Having that position in Bowling Green has been very helpful in all aspects. Caroline Ruschell stated that she had the opportunity to meet with that group when it was first launched and did training on the work of MDTs. Christie Penn suggested adding this to the report next year. Heather Wagers stated that Ali Parham with the OAG wrote that grant when she worked for KSP. If there are any issues with sustainment, Ali can possibly assist or consult. Carrie Ovey-Wiggins stated that the crime victim advocates have been a great addition. She works with both Post 1 and Post 2 who have been involved with the MDT meetings. She has noticed a gap in communication with the victims. The County Attorney's office in her jurisdiction does not have a designated crime victim advocate. She hopes the KSP victim advocate program will continue, as it has been a great asset. Susan Rhema asked if the victim advocates are volunteers or paid positions. Timothy Adams stated that they are paid positions. She also asked what kind of emotional and psychological support they have working with the families. Timothy Adams stated that they talk to the families and try to get them to the services needed. KSP works closely with the CACs and act as a referral source.

Chelsea Harrod spoke about the safety model that DCBS is currently working on implementing. They are working to create the new intake model used by their centralized intake team when they are accepting reports. The goal of that tool is that all of the DCBS workers across the state will be using the exact same format, which will lead to consistency. She announced that they have had some leadership changes and got a new commissioner. One of the new commissioner's big projects is bringing DCBS to the 21st century. By organizing pillars, which has 5 pillars regarding socioeconomic equity, trauma and resilience, family children and youth, and health and operation. Each pillar has a crisis group team. The teams have a goal over the next 6 months for crisis stability for each pillar.

Christie Penn stated that her area spends a lot of time talking about racial equity, trauma, and resilience. For 2021, they have collaborated with Dr. Steven Nifley, Director for the Collective Care Center at Spaulding University. He will be doing a yearlong learning collaborative doing training on healing from racial trauma. His model is for working with adults, but has not been translated into working with children.

Laura Kretzer stated that the Northern KY CAC applied for a national grant from the National Children's Alliance to support training specifically to address human trafficking of children. Some of it will be specific to forensic interviewing and the introduction of evidence in forensic interviews. This training will benefit all of the CACs in the state. She also stated that there was a training in December by UK on secondary traumatic stress sponsored by CAC of KY. This training was open to all MDT members. Many of the KSP advocates attended.

Cathy York stated that the OAG held a training on trauma-informed sexual assault investigations. There were over 100 participants. She and Heather Wagers presented on the current laws in Kentucky and some statistics. She stated there was a prosecutor's round table that discussed their experiences. Dr. Garland with Phoenix Rising spoke about her efforts in the Bowling Green area. There was a session on forensic interviews by SANE nurses, and a session on report writing for police officers. She is trying to upload it to You-Tube for anyone who wishes to watch it.

VIII. Adjourn: Motion to adjourn was made by Caroline Ruschell. Motion was seconded by Christie Penn. Motion passed unanimously.

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